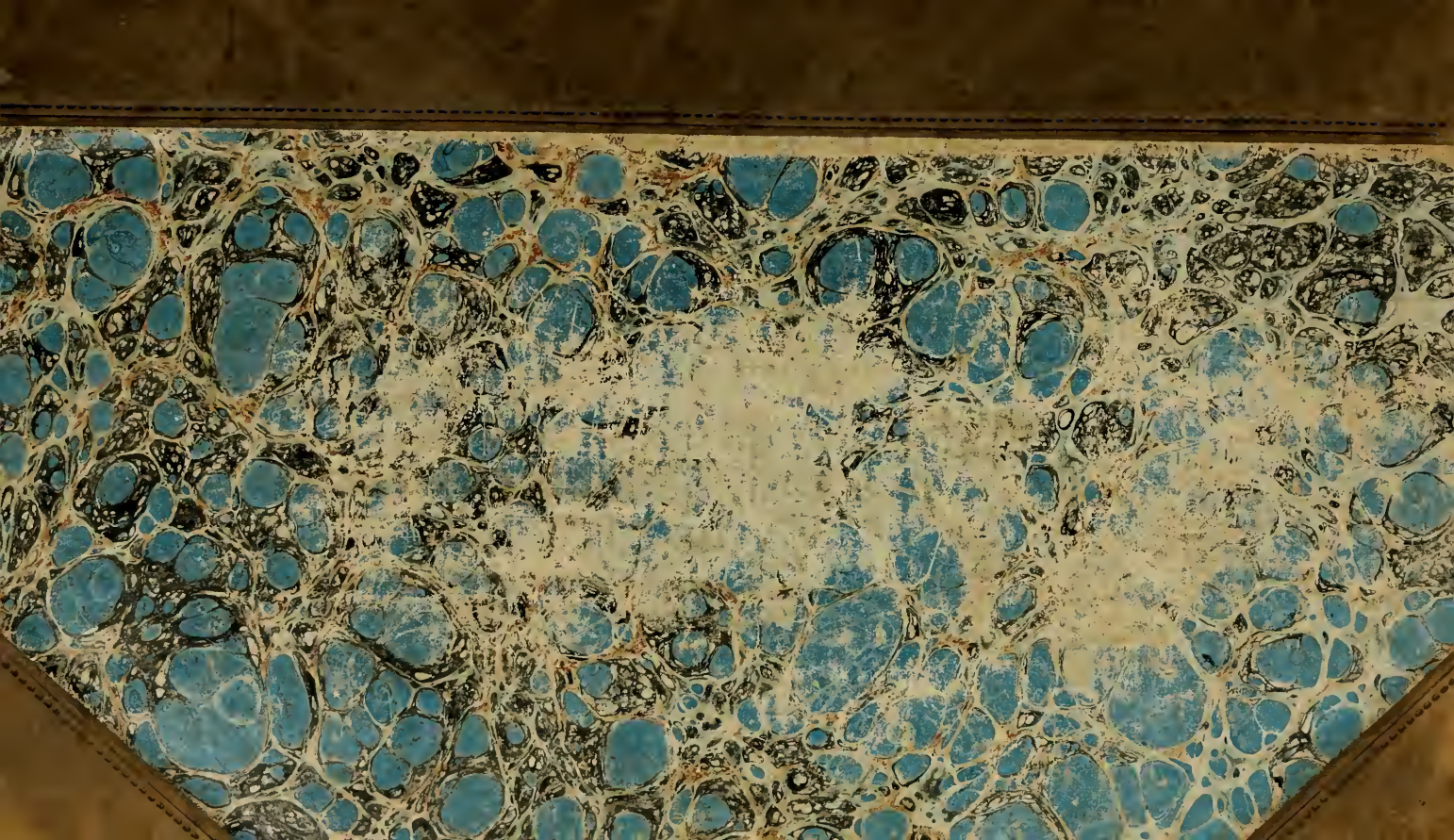

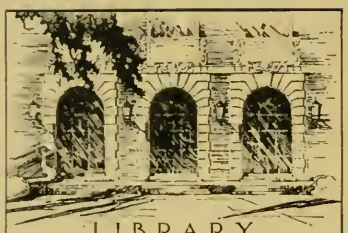

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"THE TRUE POSITION OF THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH:"

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

Episcopal Chapel of St. John the Evangelist, Edinburgh,

ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1842.

THE DAY APPOINTED BY THE DIOCESAN SYNOD, FOR RECEIVING CONGREGATIONAL OFFERINGS, IN AID OF THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH SOCIETY.

BY E. B. RAMSAY, M.A., F.R.S.E.

Incumbent of St. John's, in the Diocese of Edinburgh and Dean.

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TO

THE GENTLEMEN OF THE VESTRY,

AND TO

THE CONGREGATION

OF THE

EPISCOPAL CHAPEL OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, EDINBURGH,

THIS SERMON

(PUBLISHED BY THEIR DESIRE)

IS RESPECTFULLY PRESENTED

BY THEIR

AFFECTIONATE FRIEND AND PASTOR,

E. B. RAMSAY.

23, Ainslie Place, Edinburgh,
Dec. 24, 1842.

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THE

TRUE POSITION

OF THE

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

"THEN THE DISCIPLES, EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY, DETERMINED TO SEND RELIEF UNTO THE BRETHREN WHICH DWELT IN JUDEA."—*Acts*, xi. 29.

From this and parallel passages of the New Testament, it is abundantly evident that distant portions of the early Christian Church communicated with each other in deeds of charity and beneficence,—that believers who were blessed with a larger portion of this world's wealth, contributed towards the necessities of those who had less; and that the bond of churchmanship was recognised as a sufficient claim upon the sympathy and assistance of churchmen. The text refers to pecuniary aid, which the disciples at Antioch had determined to send to the suffering brethren of the Church of Jerusalem; and we have reference also in St. Paul's Epistles to collections made for similar purposes at Corinth, in Macedonia, and

Achaia; and in regard to these benevolent contributions, the disciples are urged to give "bountifully, not grudgingly or of necessity." The principle, therefore, on which poorer brethren of the Church make application to those who are more wealthy, is sound and scriptural. There can be no objection to those who need assistance, making known especially their *spiritual* distresses, and soliciting relief from the difficulties which they experience in decently maintaining the services of the sanctuary; no apology, therefore, should be deemed necessary for a society, the organisation of which is for the express object of assisting and supporting the poorer congregations of the Church, and of which the chief resource for raising the necessary funds, is by an appeal to the charity of the whole.

I would, in the first place, then, offer a brief notice of the particular position in which this Church is placed, for whose benefit these annual collections are demanded; and for this purpose we must revert for a few moments to some of the past circumstances of our ecclesiastical history. At the period of the Reformation, whilst the great Divines of the Church of England were carrying on the work of restoring primitive truth and order, they acted, in all things concerning the Church, with caution and discretion. They removed at once whatever they conceived to be erroneous and corrupt, but with no less anxiety did they preserve

what was undoubtedly Apostolic and Catholic. They built upon the old and existing foundation, nor did they for a moment hesitate to retain and reform what they knew to be in principle sound, although at the time associated with superstitious practices, or overlaid with accumulated corruptions. "They dealt," says Bishop Bull, "with our Church, as they did with our temples or material Churches. They did not pull them down, and raise new structures in their places—no, nor so much as new consecrate the old ones—but only removed the objects and occasions of idolatrous worship, and took away some little superstitious trinkets; in other things leaving them as they found them, and freely, and without scruple making use of them."* Not so the Reformers in Scotland. They proceeded in a different spirit. The Reformers of the clerical order considered that they could not too far depart from the state of things then existing; that in polity and ceremonials, the direct opposite of what was wrong must be right,—a principle which may be traced throughout the whole of their proceedings. When considering existing evils and abuses in the Church, they did not enquire if they were practices which had been merely *corrupted* from primitive and Apostolical usage, and therefore needed to be reformed; such policy seemed to them time-serving

* Quoted in Quarterly Review, Vol. LXIX., page 529. The whole article is worthy of attentive study.

and compromising. They required an entire change. All this was easily accomplished in an age when men's passions were excited, and when a spirit of general insubordination had broken loose; and more especially when too many were found ready to join in the work of destruction, from selfish and avaricious motives. It is with shame and sorrow, therefore, we are compelled to acknowledge, that destructive as were many of the principles and movements connected with the Reformation in England, the scenes of disorder in Scotland were far more deplorable; there was a lamentable spoliation of Church property, a fearful sacrilege of holy things. We need not, therefore, be surprised to find, that amidst such scenes, men did not pause to deliberate calmly, and examine carefully the true principles of Church reform.

But from the commencement of the times of which we speak, there were men in Scotland who could discriminate between what was primitive and what was of recent invention—men whose cooler judgments, and more informed minds could discern what was in principle sound and true, amidst the corruptions and the errors with which it had become entangled. They mourned over the wreck which they saw around them—they deplored the religious license and anarchy of their times; and, without any wish to defend abuses, or to retain corruptions, they would gladly have seen the Church restored to her pristine purity,

without being defaced and stript of all her external ornament—"in her majesty, riding prosperously, because of truth, of meekness, and righteousness." There have never been wanting in Scotland a band of theologians, who have thus borne their testimony against the indiscriminate destruction of a zeal, certainly without caution, if not without knowledge—who have raised their voice equally against Romish corruption, and against Puritan curtailment; and as there exists *now* a communion, who, as their spiritual descendants, have continued to maintain the same principles and polity, let it be considered, for a few moments, how we, as Anglican churchmen, stand in this country in regard to our ecclesiastical position.*

The Established Church of this portion of the empire, is in polity strictly Presbyterian. The great body of Dissenters from the Establishment, whatever be their differences in other matters, agree in this—all reject Episcopacy. We are a small body, therefore, who stand for those Church principles which we believe to be in accordance with Apostolic order and primitive discipline. Our position in Scotland is very different from the position of those who maintain the same principles in England. There they are established; in Scotland, as Non-conformists, we are only tolerated. There, Episcopalians are the decided majority; here, we

* See Note A.

are a small minority. In England, the Episcopalian does not discern any *prima facie* necessity for defending his principles at all; he falls in with the Church as it is established, and recognised by the law and by the State; and he rather considers that those who *dissent* from that Church should give reasons for their dissent, than he for his conformity. But in Scotland we are the Non-conformists; the Communion recognised by the State is not that to which we can conscientiously adhere; and if we have no legitimate *reasons* for our non-conformity, we are well aware that we may properly be asked, why should we continue separate? Unity in religious discipline and profession is in itself so desirable, that it should not be lightly abandoned or violated, except on conscientious grounds. From the peculiarities of the case, therefore, the Episcopalian in Scotland is compelled to give a reason for the ecclesiastical position which he maintains; conscious, that if he have not reasons for his non-conformity, his conduct is indefensible. Naturally, as a loyal subject, his prepossessions would lean towards the Communion recognised by the State. Besides which, he is surrounded with relatives, friends, and neighbours who belong to that Communion. Ancestors of his own, (as ancestors of mine have done,) may have fought and died for the principles on which that establishment is founded; he cordially joins with its members in maintaining charitable in-

stitutions, and in promoting benevolent plans for the alleviation of the temporal wants of his countrymen—their sickness, poverty, and distress; he is associated with them in the kindly and courteous intercourse of ordinary life. For my own part, there are clergymen of the Established Church of Scotland whose characters I cordially respect, and with whose personal friendship I have been honoured. But there is nothing inconsistent with such sentiments in saying, that we dare not, we cannot, accept of the interpretations of the blessed Word of God which is derived from the traditions of Calvin, where we believe those interpretations to be opposed to that which is catholic and primitive.

If a man really believe, that, from the very first ages of the Church, there existed three orders in the Christian ministry—that to the Episcopal order was committed exclusively the office and the power of ordination; in other words, of continuing, by unbroken succession, from the Apostles, the ministry through which the great truths of the Gospel were to be promulgated, and its sacred ordinances administered. If he believe, that only by an Episcopal succession from the Apostles themselves can that power of ordination be legitimately and *regularly* derived—that Episcopacy is the bond or appointed instrument through which the Unity of the Church Catholic is to be preserved and maintained—If he believe that grace is com-

municated by the Sacraments; that by Baptism the believer is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, thereby made "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven"—If he believe that the holy Eucharist is a *constant* channel of communication with the Head of the Church, and of the *highest* order—a mystery beyond the powers of language to define. If he believe in the expediency of a liturgical form of worship, as that which is most sanctioned by Scripture—as that universally approved by catholic example—as that recommended by the experience of the most devout and holiest of men. If he recognise the wisdom and the piety of observing the great commemorative festivals of the Church as practised from the earliest times,—If he believe these to be important, to be essential elements of Church membership, how is he to act towards a Communion, of which the abolition of Episcopacy is one of the first principles—where all regenerating influence is denied to the one sacrament—where the other is celebrated only at distant intervals, and withheld from the infirm, the sick, and the dying? Accustomed to his own impressive and devotional Liturgy—having imbibed its spirit, and experienced its power, can he join in extempore prayer with which he has no previous acquaintance, and in which, therefore, he cannot fully sympathise? Can he bear the thought that

his Christian year shall be secularized and denuded of those holy festivals and observances with which he has been accustomed to make a special commemoration of the great events of his Saviour's life, and to preserve the association of all that is most solemn and most sacred?

We are conscientiously persuaded, that no movement in the Church was ever more opposed to its original constitution, than the abolition or rejection of Episcopacy—that it was a fearful departure from Apostolic order is my deliberate conviction. In that fatal step we can discern the introduction of much of the *democratical* spirit into the affairs of the Church, and many of those discordant elements under which we have suffered since the Reformation. Much has been written in defence of that daring step. Men may have persuaded themselves to glory in that which is their weakness and their defect, as we know was done by some of the early continental Reformers; Calvin, Beza, and others, at first apologised for their abandonment of Episcopacy, as necessary, from the spirit and character of their times, yet subsequently *maintained* with acrimony, the position to which, from circumstances, they had been driven. After all that has been written on the subject, and after all the objections that can be raised, repeated, and re-stated, as they are from time to time, the plain and obvious argument deduced from the *historical* fact remains unshaken

and unassailable—viz. "that every Church founded by an Apostle was under one and the same form of government, and that all other Churches had also the same form, and that no other form was tolerated for fifteen centuries. That our Lord himself commissioned his Apostles to build his Church, and promised them in the work the guidance of the Holy Spirit. That they did, in point of FACT, build according to one uniform plan, and that, in so important a matter, we must conclude them to have had that promised guidance." *

It is impossible for us, then, in common consistency with our principles, to enter any communion constituted in direct violation of what we conceive to be thus manifestly the Apostolic model. We pass no sentence against those who have adopted different views—we do not presume to judge others, who, to their own Master, must stand

* Bishop of London's three Sermons on the Church, 1842.

A clear and compendious view of the historical argument for the Scriptural authority of Episcopacy, may be obtained by the general reader from the following works:—

1. Bishop Russell's Sermon at Consecration of Bishop Walker, 3d Edit.
2. Rev. J. Sinclair's "Dissertations vindicating the Church of England," 1st Dissertation on Episcopacy. Rivington, 1838.
3. Bishop Onderdonk's "Episcopacy tested by Scripture," edited by Rev. J. M. Rodwell, with Appendix. London, Leslie.
4. The Hon. and Rev. Mr. Perceival on Apostolical Succession, 2d Edit.

or fall—but it is necessary that we show a reason why we cannot recognise as OUR *Church* any communion which has not the Episcopal succession in its constitution. There are questions on which the approval and sanction of an Establishment is no satisfactory decision; and, whatever importance may be attached to the Establishment principle itself in the abstract, (and we are well aware of its importance,) no one will maintain, that in theological questions it is any test of truth, or that it is sufficient to bear down the appeals which we make to Scripture, and the testimony of the universal Church. It appears to me that the true position of Episcopalians in Scotland is often far from being understood, and, in consequence, that their views and opinions are frequently misrepresented,—their objects altogether mistaken. Thus, because we consider the Scottish Reformers to have gone too far in the work of destruction and of change, the idea is become prevalent that we have a strong bias towards the practices and tenets of the Church of Rome: Because, on Church principles, we cannot conform to the Establishment, it is asserted that we look upon all its members as beyond the pale of salvation—that we are anxiously anticipating its downfall, if not secretly taking measures for its destruction. Nothing can be more unfounded in fact—nothing more illogical in reasoning, than such conclusions. Our views and principles, as I before stated, are equally removed

from Romanism as from Puritanism. We hold that a polity, doctrine, and worship, Apostolic and catholic, are to be found between these two extremes. In this path we find the ground to be secure; here we would step firmly, following the great luminaries of the Anglican Church—the Hookers, Barrows, and Taylors—mighty men of a former age—the pious and learned defenders of the faith, who were Protestant against Popish corruptions of the truth, and against Puritan curtailments. Our non-conformity with a Church Established by law, undoubtedly implies an opinion that we do not find in it all the requisites and full characteristics of an Apostolical and Scriptural Church; but we pass no sentence upon the future condition of its members. God forbid that I should presume thus to limit the mercy of God, or to subtract aught from the efficacy of that blood which was shed upon the Cross for all. I deplore—I deeply deplore, that Episcopacy has ever been rejected, because I see in it the bond of union for the whole Church of Christ—the order by which, under the administration of the Holy Spirit of God, the communion of Christ's faithful people on earth are appointed to be governed and edified. But terms of communion may not be always identical with terms of salvation, and we are ever ready to concede to others that liberty of conscience which we claim for ourselves.

With regard to the feelings which are enter-

tained towards the National Church, *as* an Establishment, it will be found, that the respect of Scottish Episcopalians will never be withheld, from the diligence and zeal with which conscientious Pastors are labouring for the welfare, the moral and spiritual improvement of the People entrusted to their charge; and further, that their respect for the civil institutions of their country, forbids their contemplating any measures which would be injurious to the legal and constitutional rights of any of their fellow-citizens; besides which, they are well aware, that the overthrow of the Northern Establishment would not be the means of making men Episcopalians. If they do not join our communion on the conviction of its Apostolical authority, their nominal union with us would be no real advantage. It seems, therefore, highly unreasonable to conclude, that because we make exertions for the benefit of members of our own communion, we are therefore meditating hostilities. Our efforts are called forth to supply manifest and urgent wants,—wants in every department of our communion, long experienced and deeply felt. In carrying out these plans, we neither contemplate injury or aggression, but are simply endeavouring to perform an obvious duty, and to discharge an imperative obligation, due to our Christian brethren of the same household in the faith.

Many are the attacks with which our Church has been recklessly assailed, more especially by those whose bounden duty it was to support and stand by it. Some of these movements can only, we fear, be attributed to that malignant and persecuting spirit which so frequently accompanies men in an APOSTACY from their principles. The whole of these attacks turn upon gross misrepresentations. But, indeed, we ought not to be surprised at misrepresentations, when we consider how few persons bring to theological enquiry to theological discussion, and still less to theological controversy, the acumen, the learning, the ability, the candour, and the deliberation, which are essentially necessary for forming a right judgment on such matters. But all surprise at misrepresentation will cease, when we observe the mode in which such subjects are made the materials for popular and party excitement—when we see accusations brought against the Church, to justify a schismatical and sinful violation of its unity; and, above all, when we find ourselves the objects of attack from the party *newspapers* of the day. The mingling of this element in religious discussion and religious controversy, is one of the sorest evils of our time. I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion, that nothing in modern literature exhibits a spirit more uncandid, more ungenerous, more alien from the healing and peaceful spirit of Christianity, than

the articles of such newspapers, when pledged as the advocate of a particular party in the (so called) religious world.

Amid these attacks, it should be no surprise, to find *my own* views and my own opinions misrepresented; and although, as a system, I cordially disapprove of a pastor, in the course of ministerial instruction, putting himself, his own concerns, or his own private feelings, prominently forward before his congregation, still perhaps, on such an occasion as the present, the opportunity is fitting for saying a few words of explanation. It may be due to you, if not due to the world. I have already observed then, upon the path in which the Church of England Theology would conduct us; guarding against the errors of those who would corrupt the Truth of Scripture by addition, and against the errors of those who would injure it by curtailment —the one is the Romish, the other the Puritan error. The teaching by writers of our own Church, may have deviated into one or other of these extremes, and so far may have been untrue to their own principles; but whatever others may teach, in this middle path, I would by God's help endeavour, as hitherto I have done, to walk, and so to teach others. And this path, I conscientiously and from the heart believe, is to be found in the doctrines and services of our Church; or, in other words, I believe the Prayer-Book and the Thirty-nine Articles, to furnish a true exposition

of the Holy Scriptures,—an exposition according to Catholic antiquity, when used, not as an independent authority, but as the interpreter of holy writ. I have ever received the Articles according to their obvious and grammatical interpretation, and gratefully reverence the characters and the work of our Reformers. If in the writings of any divine, however learned or however pious, I discern a teaching which leans to the one extreme or to the other, an opinion which is not in accordance with the Church, that teaching and opinion I would disclaim and renounce.

In recent publications by divines of the English Church are contained some statements of which I disapprove, and of which I have expressed my disapproval. Indeed, so far from being a blind follower or disciple of any modern divines, my own studies, such as they are, my own feelings and bias have been towards the *older* divines of our Church; and if there were any authority to which I would be disposed to bend, (especially in the doctrines of the sacraments and of justification) I should say my leaning is to the authority of the venerable Hooker. Any man's usefulness and influence in society generally, may be lessened by a continued and systematic course of misrepresentation. But when clergymen are accused of holding erroneous doctrines, or adopting superstitious practices, the particular faults and errors with which they are charged should be specified. A

name is nothing, and may be given by those who, without understanding what it means, intend merely to affix an opprobrious epithet. Oh! it is sad to see the malignity with which men's characters are assailed! and the flippant ignorance with which religious opinions are discussed, by those who take upon them the office of censors; and it is lamentable to see laymen, engaged in the ordinary business of life, judicially and summarily deciding high questions in Theology and Church polity. But the truth is, men will sometimes venture boldly into the sea of religious controversy, simply because they have not sounded the depths of its mighty waters, or known the difficulties of keeping the right course amidst its rocks and quicksands.

I have through life especially avoided attaching myself to any party *as* a party. It has been at any rate, my anxious and prayerful *desire* to teach the truth to you and to your children, and to preserve your minds from the influence of error, in whatever quarter it may arise,—whether from the high Church or the low Church advocates. But I am equally averse to compromise what I believe to be TRUTH; and I should blush for any member of our Church, who, to avoid the suspicion of leaning to Romish error, would compromise her essential and catholic doctrines, who would consent to waive her divine authority or compromise her divine ordinances.

As, therefore, we wish to live in charity and in brotherly kindness towards all men, and at the same time, to enjoy the privilege of a firm and consistent adherence to our own principles and form of Church polity and worship, so we would act upon the great principle laid down by St. Paul, and be ready "to do good unto all men—but *especially* to those who are of the household of faith," *i. e.* we discern a primary duty and an especial obligation, to make all legitimate exertions for the support and well-being of our own communion. I cannot help thinking that such efforts will be looked upon with respect by candid Christians of all denominations; indeed, they might be disposed to consider us as guilty of a dereliction of duty, in *not* having sooner and more efficiently discharged this obligation to the poorer portions of our Church.

Of late years there has been an increased activity in our Communion, for the development and carrying out of its own principles, and for means of increased usefulness. This activity has more especially been employed on two great projects, designed for the benefit of our Church. The one project is yet comparatively in its infancy : the formation of a College or Academical institution, which shall combine two important purposes, viz. that of providing a general education on the principles of their own Church, for children of its members, and also a fitting theological training to our own

candidates for the ministry. It is not my present purpose to enter upon *this* subject. I may, however, in passing observe, how unfair and uncandid have been the opposition by which this plan, (in itself, a most natural one) has been met. Before a single rule or regulation has been drawn up,—before one functionary or master has been appointed—before one step has been taken towards determining its management, code of laws, or course of study, it has been confidently described as an institution got up for the express purpose of promoting and disseminating Tractarian Theology. But my present purpose now is to plead for another object, and to claim once more your assistance, for an Institution of our Church, of a more general character. The *Scottish Episcopal Church Society* having existed for four years, the soundness of its constitution, therefore, as well as the efficacy of its operations may now be fairly estimated.

I believe it will be admitted by all, who are capable of forming a correct judgment on the subject, that the *great* difficulty under which our Church suffers, and under which she has in past times suffered, may be comprised in one word—her *Poverty*. We have been met by this evil at every turn, it has been felt in the training of our youth for the work of the Ministry, in the building and keeping in repair of our Churches, in providing incomes for our clergy, and subsistence for those who, by infirmity

or age, are incapacitated from further labours in the vineyard; in our attempts to give education to the children of our poor, and even to provide prayer-books and bibles for their use. This poverty has been so great as to spread a chill over all our operations; and until the Society, of which I am now the advocate, was called into existence, the means for its relief, were miserably insufficient. Some years since a fund was raised through the exertions of a few benevolent individuals, (whose names yet live in our grateful remembrance,) for the benefit of the *Scottish Episcopal Church*. The extent of its operations have been to give sixty pounds a-year to each of the Bishops, and a mere pittance to some of the most necessitous of the inferior clergy. Nor have the trustees of this fund ever been able to accomplish more. Accordingly, in 1838, our new Society was constituted, with machinery calculated for a more popular and extended plan of operation. One peculiarity will, I conceive, be a strong recommendation of it, to all who value the principle of order and Church authority: It is established and constituted by Canon,—it is part and parcel of the law of the Church,—it is, in fact, the Church itself acting through the agency or instrumentality of a society. From the experience which we have had, we are enabled to speak confidently of the benefits which have already accrued from it; something

having been accomplished to mark its effects in regard to all the objects for which it was constituted. These, agreeably to the XL. Canon of our Church, are declared to be fourfold, viz.

1. To provide a fund for aged or infirm clergymen, or salaries for their assistants, and general aid for congregations, struggling with pecuniary difficulties.

2. To assist candidates for the ministry, in completing their theological studies.

3. To provide Episcopal schoolmasters books, and tracts for the poor.

4. To assist in the formation or enlargement of diocesan libraries.

It is now a source of deep anxiety lest the good effects which have been *already* produced should not be sustained. It is, I fear, the tendency of all societies to decline in their resources, as they grow older. New projects and novel speculations draw off men's zeal from those already established. But here are objects of *permanent* interest; and objects which, in an unendowed Church, are of permanent *necessity*. As therefore there lies upon us the obligation to aid our poorer brethren in their relation to us of fellow-churchmen and fellow-christians, so it becomes an urgent duty that we should endeavour to sustain the resources of a Canonical Society, on which that aid so much depends. The very existence of many of our

poorer congregations hangs upon the allowances made by the Society; and as it has no fixed income, except the interest derived from a very small capital, it is of great importance that we should procure permanent subscribers, and awaken a feeling towards the objects of the Society, beyond the contributions made by a casual collection. In hopes therefore of exciting that more permanent and cordial interest, I would now conclude by a few observations, on the effects of poverty, as it bears upon the efficiency and well-being of the Church generally.

I. First, then, let us consider the poverty of our Church, as it affects the Clergy. A Church, like an individual believer, may be secularised, and her Clergy injured by the temptations incident on wealth. The poverty of a Church, therefore, may, to a certain extent prove beneficial, may give nerve and decision, and save her from a luxurious and a worldly spirit. But there is a degree of poverty, the tendency of which is to chill and dishearten, rather than to brace and encourage; there is a poverty which implies not only a want of many things decent and becoming, but a want even of what is *needful*, a want of suitable subsistence for the clergy, a want of means to support the very fabrics and the ordinary services of the Church. The visitor in his casual progress through Scotland, may meet with Episcopal Churches which do not

indicate the existence of the evils we now speak of, and where the performance of Divine Worship is conducted with decency and respectability; but in the remote and scattered districts of the north, and in the crowded population of our large cities, the effects of this poverty are severely felt, in the difficulty of procuring the benefit of Church services for the many who require them. And I need scarcely remind you how sorely these difficulties must press upon the Clergy. In the work of the ministry itself, they find sufficient to occupy all their attention, and to call forth all their energies. Every conscientious man must have experienced the weight of these obligations, and the anxieties of such a responsibility. In some parts of our poor Church, the labours of the pastor are much increased by the *distances* over which his flock is scattered; families reside at thirty miles, and in some instances farther from the clergyman's dwelling place. In all that intercourse with his flock, which is so essential to their comfort, well-being, and spiritual improvement, poverty presents numerous drawbacks and discouragements. A pastor, when visiting the house of mourning, will often encounter the most painful and heart-rending *temporal* privations; and it is easy to conceive his grief and sorrow, at being obliged to witness distresses, which, alas! he has it not in his power to mitigate. When trial and sickness, too, come within his own domestic circle,

poverty may then invest them with such aggravations of bitterness, as will almost incapacitate him for ministerial exertions at all. Need we be surprised that the pastor, who, in a wealthy and benevolent country, has been thus for years allowed to suffer unnoticed and unaided, should have experienced something of the bitterness of NEGLECT? How often must his spirits have drooped, his heart desponded, when he met with so little sympathy, and so little assistance, from those who might be supposed willing to afford both? How cheerless seem his pastoral struggles and labours, amongst those poor members of Christ's fold, with whom his lot has been cast. I know well, that it is not from human approbation that the conscientious minister of Christ's everlasting Gospel is to draw his encouragement and reward; but still, under such depressing circumstances, there is no one whose arm at times will not be unnerved, and his power of doing good painfully diminished. Allowing for the admixture of inherent human frailty, our poorer brethren have hitherto gone on faithfully and diligently; they have persevered in their appointed course for conscience' sake, and for love's sake; but oh! how often must it have been through sorrow of heart and heaviness of spirit! Having long been comparatively neglected, they are now grateful for the brighter prospects opened to them through the operations of our Church Society. Let it never be forgotten, that of our incumbents, fully one-

third have hitherto been supporting their professional station with respectability, and usefully discharging its duties, with annual clerical incomes *under* £80—that, of these incomes several have been under £50, and some even considerably less! For the last three years through the operations of this Society, the minimum of clerical income in our Church has been preserved at £80. This is a small matter, but it is doing something. We trust it is not unreasonable to hope, that we shall be able to *raise* that minimum for the future; it would, at least, be distressing, it would be discreditable, were we compelled to *fall* back from it.*

II. But, secondly, the question does not affect the Clergy only; there is another party to be considered, and other interests of the highest importance to be taken into account—I mean the interests of a portion of your fellow-countrymen, the People among whom the clergy themselves minister in holy things. I address those who acknowledge religion to be the best friend of man; I speak to many who have, I trust, found in it the surest consolation in sorrow, the strongest hope and only stay amid the world's bereavements, and the world's privations. What greater boon, then, can you confer upon the poor northern Episcopalians, than by providing them with similar consolations; than by furnishing them with means for Pastoral superintendence and Church ordinances,

* See Note B.

according to their own faith, and the faith of their fathers? It is well known, that they will travel many a weary mile, over moor and mountain, to their humble Chapels; nor will they grudge the toil, if they are sure of access to those holy Rites and Sacraments, which they so devoutly love and venerate; but in the present state of many districts, this can hardly be said to be *secured* to them. They have no assurance that an efficient Ministry will be continued to them, when their present Pastors shall be removed by death, or be incapacitated by infirmity, or by age; and, therefore, I do not know a more desirable mode of administering Christian kindness to a people, poor and scattered through wide and unfertile districts, than by aiding their *ecclesiastical* deficiencies. Let it be remembered, that the Episcopalians, of whom we speak, are conscientiously attached to their own modes of faith and forms of worship. We are not asking for the means of bringing in new congregations, or of adding to our ranks. Our object now is to confer on those already in the Church, means of *retaining* the spiritual advantages they know how to value, and to increase and render permanent their facilities for pastoral instruction, and for attendance on Church ordinances. There is a spirit of deep and genuine piety, pervading the class of persons of whom we now speak; they are Episcopalians from conviction, as well as from inheritance; let it, therefore, be dis-

tinctly understood, that with exertions now put forth to relieve the spiritual destitution of our Church, the idea of proselyting is not blended. We intrude upon no man's Vineyard, but we wish our own to be kept and dressed. We claim it as our Right; we consider it our Duty to preserve to the members of our communion, the succession of ministers Episcopally ordained, and to make provision for insuring such ministrations as shall be adequate to their wants and circumstances. Should they be deprived of this, the spiritual condition of many might indeed be lamentable. Their attachment to their own modes of faith and worship, forms a complete barrier against joining an unepiscopal communion. In many districts, the establishment has not the means of receiving them; they would therefore either have *no* public services at all, or they might embrace those errors of faith and worship, which all Protestants would equally wish to avert.

To conclude, I should lament deeply were it considered that in entering upon these details, we had secularised the short portion of time destined for Christian instruction, and that this morning's discussion had been without serious thought, or spiritual application,—we trust not. Charity to the poorer brethren is an essential part of the blessed Gospel of Jesus Christ—one of its holiest and most frequent obligations. At the Last Day it will form the criterion of the believer's sincerity,

and the mark of his admission to the right hand of the throne. A time is fast approaching, in which we must all of us give an account before the Judgment-seat of Christ, of the use which we have made of our opportunities for doing good to the bodies and the souls of our poorer brethren. But if *they* shall be rejected and disavowed at the general Judgment, who have been found wanting in their contributions towards the physical sufferings of mankind; how shall we be prepared to meet hereafter with those of our own faith, our own country, our own Church, to whose call for the means of spiritual knowledge and ministerial superintendence, we have turned a deaf ear? The sentiments and language of the glorious Liturgy point to higher services of a Church above,—thither should it lead the hearts and hopes of all who join in it, whether its celebration be with all homely circumstances in the rough and lowly Highland chapels of unendowed Scottish Episcopacy, or in the stately cathedrals of England, with the pealing anthems of the full-voiced choir echoing through the lofty aisles. We should therefore look forward to a day when the various services of the sanctuary on earth, will be exchanged for the Hallelujahs and the praises of the Church triumphant! *There* all the worshippers of our earthly sanctuaries will meet, and *there* all will be equal. Let us bear in mind how the excuses we make to ourselves for not adequately assisting the Church, in this her work of Charity,

will be accepted then ; let us anticipate the adjustment and the sentences of that awful day of final consummation. Thence we should derive motives for our present labours of love to the brethren for the sake of Him who loved us and died for us—Thence we should expect our great reward—For on that day shall the righteous, and the charitable, and the pure in heart enter into the joy of their Lord.

NOTES.

Note A. p. 9.

I use the terms "Anglican Churchmen," and "Church of England Theology," because our Church, having the same Episcopal Succession, and having by Canon adopted the Thirty-nine Articles and the Liturgy, is in full *spiritual* Communion with the Church of England—a spiritual Communion now happily recognised by the State. By the Act 3 & 4 Vict. cap. 33, passed in the year 1840, the Prelates of the English Church may admit Bishops and Presbyters of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Scotland, "to perform divine service, to preach and to *administer the Sacraments*, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the united Church of England and Ireland, in Churches or Chapels within England or Ireland." There is a highly spiritual service, identical in doctrine with the Communion office of the Church of England, but varying in arrangement and in some expressions, called the "Scottish Communion office," which is in use in a few Chapels in the northern districts only, and is appointed to be used at the consecration of Bishops, and at the opening of General Synods. In direct contradiction to the Act of Parliament referred to, an attempt has lately been made to deny the spiritual Communion of the two Churches, on account of this office being used partially here. When the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishop of London, and the other Prelates, procured that Act of the Legislature, declaratory of the spiritual Communion, they were perfectly aware of all the circumstances connected with the Scottish Communion office, and that the 20th and 34th Articles of their own Church recognised, in "particular, or National Churches," full authority to adopt such a service. In the present position of the two Churches, therefore, the English Presbyter is equally inexcusable in disclaiming the spiritual authority of a Scottish Bishop within his Diocese, as a Scottish Presbyter would be, disclaiming the spiritual authority of an English Bishop within an English Diocese. The present eminent and admirable Bishop of London, has furnished by his own example, the best practical illustration of this principle. When during the last summer, (1842), his Lordship officiated in St. Paul's Edinburgh, he took the *south* side of the altar, Bishop Terrot taking the north side; nor would he, after his own sermon, pronounce the blessing, *because the Bishop of the Diocese was present*. There are many eminent and learned

divines of the Church of England, whose authority might be quoted, in corroboration of the opinion, that no English clergyman can officiate in an *independent* Chapel in Scotland, without incurring the guilt of SCHISM. I mention only one, and he a Prelate whose acuteness, learning, and zeal for the Protestant cause, will bear comparison with any divine of past or present times,—I refer to the opinion of BISHOP HORSLEY. In regard to such *separation*, he thus expresses himself:—"Clergymen of English or Irish ordination, exercising their functions in Scotland, without uniting with the Scottish Bishops, are, in my judgment, doing nothing better than keeping alive a SCHISM."—Letter to Dr. GRANT.

We have a judgment of the same great authority, upon the very Communion office which is now resorted to as a pretence for justifying SCHISM.

"With respect to the comparative merit of the two Communion offices for England and Scotland, I have no scruple in declaring, that I think the Scottish office more conformable to the primitive models, and, in my private judgment, more edifying than the English office now in use; insomuch, that if I were at liberty to follow my own private judgment, I would myself use the Scottish office in preference."—Letter to Rev. J. SKINNER.

No doubts regarding the soundness of this Communion Service, can remain upon the mind of any unprejudiced person, after a study of Mr. Bagot's very able and Christian Letter upon the subject.

NOTE B. p. 29.

Since this discourse was delivered, it is gratifying to find that, notwithstanding many unfavourable circumstances, the Congregational offerings for the ensuing year in aid of the Society, so far as they have been returned, are not diminished. The following have been received in this diocese:—

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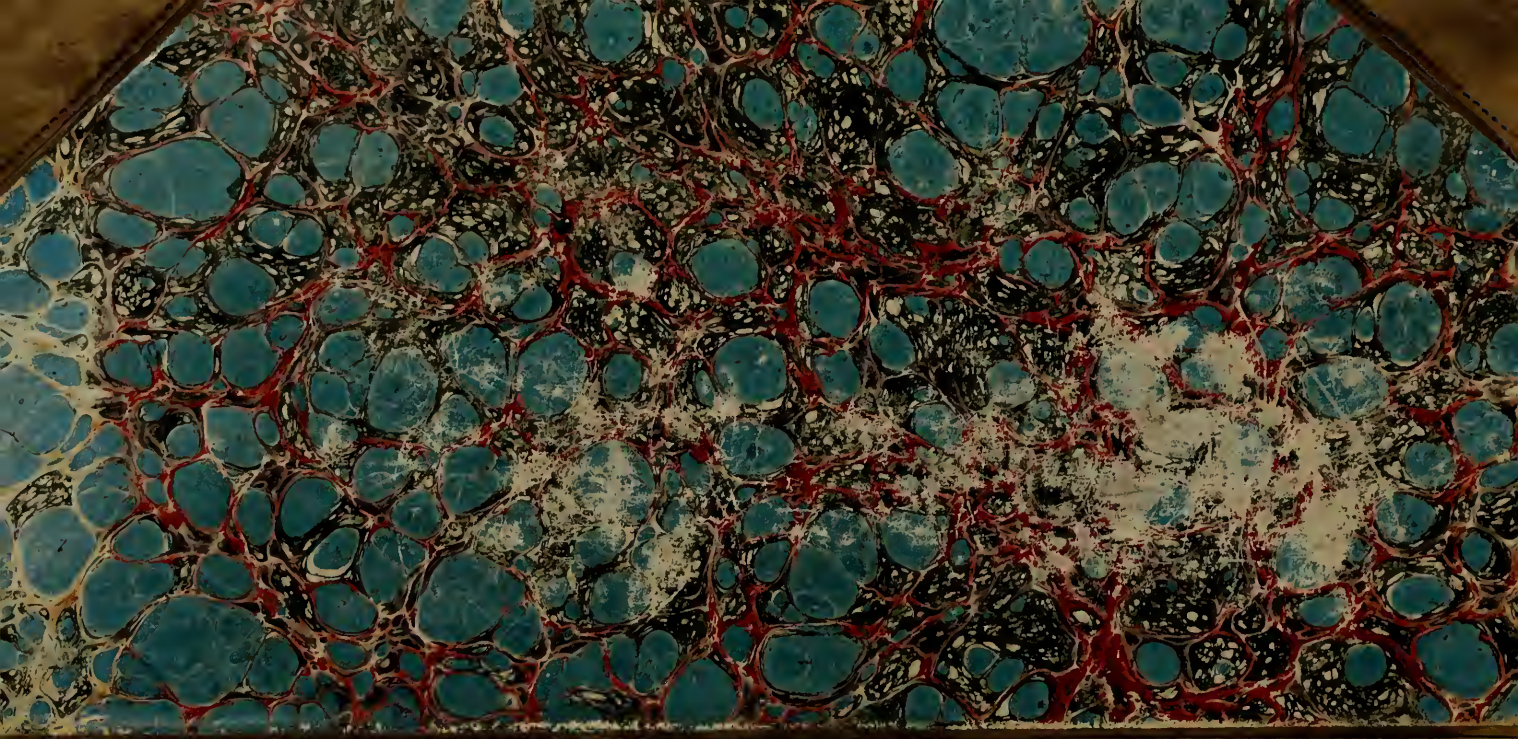
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